

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES
for
GROUPS, DISTRICTS, AREAS &
SUB/STANDING COMMITTEES
of
COCAINE ANONYMOUS



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FINANCE COMMITTEE DISCLAIMER

This document is meant to be used as a suggestion and guideline of how to establish financial procedures for Groups, Districts, Areas and Sub/Standing Committees. We understand that all countries have specific needs and rules based on individual laws and regulations. Please ensure to research and determine appropriate procedures based on the location of your Group, District, Area and Sub/Standing Committee. The suggestions listed in these guidelines are meant to be void of specific direction linked to laws and regulations based on geographic location.

FINANCE COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To develop and implement policies and procedures in all matters concerning the finances of Cocaine Anonymous, including ways and means to generate funds necessary for the continued growth of the fellowship, in accordance with our 12 Traditions.

INTRODUCTION

C.A.'s 7th Tradition reads as follows: "Every C.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

To carry the message of Cocaine Anonymous (C.A.), other than reaching out on a personal level, requires funds to support and deliver the many functions of the fellowship from the Group to World Services.

These guidelines are intended to serve as an aid to all members of C.A. worldwide and particularly those who are charged with the responsibility of handling funds. In keeping with Tradition 4, each service body can determine for itself if and how they will adopt these guidelines which are presented for use at all levels of service. They may be adopted as presented or modified and then adopted or serve as a framework for the creation of an entirely separate set of guidelines at the local level of service.

Where these guidelines are followed closely, our experience tells us that they will help avoid mismanagement of funds and lessen the chance of financial misfortunes. The hope is that this will help our fellowship to achieve financial security, safeguarding and maximizing our efforts to carry the message of C.A. and recovery to the still suffering addict.

We should always consider that the moment a C.A. member's hard-earned money is put in the basket at a C.A. meeting or event, it is expected that C.A.'s trusted servants will handle these contributions in a responsible manner. It is expected that we do everything possible to see that the money is used wisely, cared for judiciously and that a prudent reserve is kept. When this has been accomplished, it is suggested that the Group or service body forward the available balance to the next level of service. In the case of a Group this would mean their donation to the District Service Committee (DSC), for the DSC this would mean transferring funds to the Area Service Committee (ASC), and in the case of an ASC, it would mean transferring funds to the World Service Office (WSO). If you are not part of a larger service committee at this time, it is suggested that you forward any funds over and above your prudent reserve to the WSO.

C.A. is not in the business of fundraising, C.A. is in the business of carrying its lifesaving message to the addict that still suffers; we raise funds as a means to support this effort. Through our actions in raising funds we are self-supporting whether the funds come from the basket, a Unity Day event, a Convention or Workshop. Being self-supporting is the spirit of our 7th Tradition. This Tradition of self-support places us in the position to be useful agents whether as individuals, Groups, Districts, Areas, Conventions, or the WSO.

Being ever mindful that ours is a spiritual mission, we should consider well our Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts when planning fund raising activities, taking care that we

act in accordance with their guidance. The amount of funds generated from our efforts to be self-supporting is secondary to the spiritual connection that unites C.A. members around the world.

GENERAL FINANCIAL PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

There are procedures common to all levels of financial commitments and service within the worldwide fellowship of C.A. which benefit from a consistent framework of guidance. These procedures are detailed below along with their associated guidance and will be referred back to throughout this document.

Bank Accounts

Each service body, when setting up a bank account must meet the legal requirements of the country that it operates within along with meeting the eligibility criteria of the proposed bank. Where the service body is unable to meet the providers' eligibility criteria an alternative provider should be sought. Personal bank accounts should never be used by or in any way connected to any C.A. service body.

1. When setting up a bank account it is suggested that a local bank be used so that it is accessible to the Group, District, and Area or Standing/Sub-committee signatories.
2. Two signatories should be required for any drafts, payments, transactions or reimbursements.
3. These two signatories should both have full access to the bank accounts including online access in order to ensure complete transparency and dual accountability.
4. It is suggested that an additional member of the service committee has view only access to the on-line bank account as a means of ensuring robust checks and balance are undertaken.
5. Online ONLY bank accounts are not recommended due to the limitations they present regarding making cash deposits or withdrawals.
6. When Treasurers rotate it is essential that the bank account signatories are updated immediately and outgoing servants removed from the account. In addition, any PIN numbers, access codes, and addresses should also be changed within 3 business days of the rotation of trusted servants.
7. The Treasurer must print the bank account statement, blacking out all personal account numbers/information and names of any payees that are displayed, and submit it with the Treasurer's report to the relevant service committee to assure the fellowship of the proper handling of funds.

Monies collected are to pay the Group's expenses. The Treasurer also gives the Group regular reports on the total donations collected and expenses paid, as well as any amounts left over. A report should be given once a month, and as part of the meeting, a report as listed below for expenses and income should be prepared.

It is suggested, especially in larger groups, that the Treasurer and one other person count the money from the 7th tradition basket and the H & I can. After each meeting, money can be put in an envelope, with the date, amounts received, and any amounts paid out. The envelope should then be initialled by both parties avoiding any discrepancies later.

A typical group's "agreed" upon expenses would be rent, literature, chips, supplies, newsletter/schedules/flyers, refreshments, bank service charges, and 7th tradition. Funds belong to the Group, and the Group should know what the money is spent on. Therefore; before funds go out from the Group Treasurer that are not agreed upon expenses, the Group should have the opportunity to vote on this action. **Do not spend funds without the Group Conscience.**

All items paid in and out of the Group, should have a receipt. It is good business practice to have receipts for items like coffee, literature purchased, copies, etc. Also, you want to ask the service body for a receipt when funds are donated.

Debit Cards

Debit cards may be issued to a group if approved by the Group Conscience. It is strongly suggested that the need for a debit card be evaluated cautiously to avoid the additional risk posed to the fellowship. The checks and balances relevant to bank accounts, online banking, etc. are considered **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** when a debit card is issued.

Online Banking

1. Where the Bank Account being utilized by a Group, District, Area or Sub-committee offers Online Banking, it is essential that this function is only used where there is a 'two step' authorization process. That is, where two signatories of the account are required to review and authorize **ANY** proposed activity within the account before it may proceed. Such activities include but are not limited to:
 - a. Transfer of funds
 - b. Direct debits
 - c. Standing orders
 - d. Requests for duplicate documentation and/or check/cheque books
2. It is suggested that an additional member of the service committee has view only access to the on-line bank account as a means of ensuring robust checks and balance are undertaken.
3. Passwords and logins should be changed within 3 business days of the rotation of trusted servants.
4. On-line payment of fellowship expenses should be paid to businesses/vendors that accept online payments wherever possible, thus reducing the possibility of delayed payments and potential financial penalties.
5. Copies of transactions made on-line should be printed and kept with the service committee Treasurer for book-keeping purposes.
6. It is suggested that if the service committee chooses to receive electronic payments, these should be linked to those service committees' bank account **ONLY** and **NEVER BE CO-MINGLED** with a personal account.
7. Wherever possible in any commentary associated with electronic transactions, always invoke the Sixth Tradition statement: *In the spirit of Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.*
8. The Treasurer must print the online bank account statement, blacking out all personal account numbers/information and names of any payees that are displayed

and submit it with the Treasurer's report to the relevant service committee to assure the fellowship of the proper handling of funds

Online Payment Gateways **(Including Event Ticketing Online)**

Many service bodies involved in putting on fellowship events now offer C.A. members the ability to register and make payments via an online payment gateway/ticketing agent. Personal data collected should only be used for the specific purpose stated and compliance with country and/or state data protection legislations should be ensured.

Online payment gateways can be a convenient method of payment for our members. . Often a prompt and secure method for financial transactions to be credited to the service body Bank Account, the benefits of this should be considered against the cost of the service. Nothing presented here specifically precludes a local service body from using these tools as part of their C.A. event management; however, any such decision should be guided by the Group Conscience, respect for our Traditions, and the effect upon the fellowship as a whole. As such, it is suggested that decisions to employ online payment gateways be done only after careful deliberation and discussion within the fellowship; including, if possible, the Regional Trustee.

Where an online payment gateway is used and/or a link featured on any C.A. website, it is essential that it is accompanied by the following disclaimer (as found in the World Service Information Technology (IT) Workbook and Guidelines). The disclaimer should be included on each page of the online payment gateway that the C.A. service committee are able to edit and in close proximity to the link, widget, or form on any C.A. website:

"In the spirit of Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. As such [name of service body] of Cocaine Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous as a whole, does not endorse and is not affiliated with any of the companies and/or services offered on the site. Any links to external websites or services are only provided as a convenience to our members".

It is highly suggested that an online payment gateway is only linked to the relevant C.A. service body bank account and never to a member's personal bank account. The online payment gateway account should be registered to the service body. If member contact information is required, it is suggested that this be limited to the elected fellowship member charged with such responsibility as determined by the local District and Area Service Committee consciences.

Handling and Managing Cash

1. Always count cash donations during or at the end of the meeting of the service body.
2. Make and retain a record of all cash donations received. Always have another member of the service committee recount for verification and then counter sign the cash record.
3. It is suggested that a check/cheque be used to pay a business/vendor if an online option is not available. However, in the event a business/vendor will only accept a

cash payment, a written receipt of the charges and payment must be received and retained with the financial records of the service body.

4. No member or trusted servant should ever leave a meeting with a cash donation that has not been counted, recorded, and counter signed.
5. Ensure that all cash donations received are deposited in the committee or groups bank account at the earliest opportunity.
6. Where a group or service body does not have access to its own bank account, the cash should be deposited in an associated bank account, for a group this may be the District bank account. A receipt should be obtained for all deposits and retained with the financial records of the service committee.
7. No member should co-mingle C.A. funds with personal funds, hence a C.A. member should not deposit C.A. funds into their own personal bank account with the intention of transferring the C.A. funds at a later date by means of a check/cheque or online transaction.
8. In the event that closing cash balances do not reconcile to the recorded value, then an ad-hoc group should be convened to attempt to determine the source of the inaccuracy:
 - a. An ad-hoc group of this sort is tasked to support its trusted servants and not investigate them. At the Group level, this may be officers from the Group Service Committee; at District and Area level the ad-hoc group may be composed of the Treasurer, the Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair of a Standing/Sub-committees and/or a Delegate.
 - b. In the event the discrepancy cannot be accounted for, it should be openly reported to the service body and recorded in their minutes. This should include the investigations that were undertaken to identify how the discrepancy arose.
9. In the event that a misappropriation of funds is discovered, follow the guidance in this document in the section entitled **Preventing Mismanagement of Funds**.

Prudent Reserves

It is suggested that each group keep a prudent reserve totalling two months expenses. Each group should decide in the Group Conscience what an appropriate prudent reserve amount is. It is suggested to be conscious of large expenses that could justify alterations to the prudent reserve requirements. The Treasurer should maintain this amount and send excess monies to the next level of the service structure as a donation (see **Spirit of the 7th Tradition** below). The following table is provided to help calculate each meeting's prudent reserve:

Calculating Prudent Reserve	
Normal Monthly Expenses	
Rent	\$35.00
Literature	\$25.00
Chips	\$30.00
Office Supplies/Postage/Box Rental	\$30.00
Newsletters/Meeting Schedules	\$30.00
Refreshments	\$15.00
Bank Service Charges	\$15.00
7th Tradition - Area - 70% of Income	\$150.00
Total Monthly Expenses	<u>\$330.00</u>
Suggested Prudent Reserve (\$330 x 3)	<u>\$990.00</u>

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Newsletters/Meeting Schedules	\$30.00
Refreshments	\$15.00
Bank Service Charges	\$15.00
7th Tradition - Area - 70% of Income	\$150.00
Total Monthly Expenses	<u>\$330.00</u>
Suggested Prudent Reserve (\$330 x 2)	<u>\$660.00</u>

These amounts are an example only and should reflect actual expenses each Group, District or Area incur. Prudent Reserve is suggested to be two (2) months expenses (multiply your total monthly expenses by 2 as seen above).

Spirit of the 7th Tradition

It is suggested that all monies in excess of the Prudent Reserve and monthly expenses are traditionally forwarded to their district or area. It is suggested Groups, Districts, and Areas participate in the 70/30 plan as described in the WSO pamphlet, "The 7th Tradition". The 70/30 plan is calculated by your group's monthly income less monthly expense, less reserve and the remaining balance be split by 70% going to your district or area and the remaining 30% going to C.A. World services. Please do not keep large quantities of cash or large bank balances as this is not in spirit with the 7th tradition and has caused many problems in the past. See table below for example:

Monthly Income and Expenses	
Monthly Income	\$ 350.00
Monthly Expenses	\$ 125.00
Total	\$ 225.00
\$225 x 70% to Area/District	\$ 157.50
\$225 x 30% to C.A. World	\$ 67.50

- Prudent reserve is not used in this calculation and should be separate

Sub-Committees Accounts and Reporting

Money collected for H&I and Public Information should be kept separate from the general fund. If your groups or areas have subcommittees for H & I, PI and Fund Raisers for books, pamphlets, or special events; these should be collected as separate monies. These monies should be given to the Group's Treasurer on a monthly basis. Along with the monies collected, there should be receipts for any expenses. The expenses may be for printing flyers, stamps, food, etc. If these funds are not going to be used at the group level for these subcommittees, these funds should be passed on to the Area or District Treasurer.

Proper Tax and Government Filings for Non-Profit Corporations

It is strongly recommended that District or Area fellowships file for non-profit corporation status. Being a worldwide fellowship, it is likely that the specific requirements for achieving non-profit status (or equivalent) will vary. Non-profit corporations often need to file reports with their local, state, and/or national tax or regulatory agencies. If these reports are not filed in a timely fashion the non-profit status of the fellowship could be in jeopardy. Additionally, individuals serving as part of the non-profit could be held liable if tax and regulatory protocols are not followed. It would be wise to consult a professional for help or questions.

Liability Insurance

In many instances it is required for the C.A. fellowship to provide proof of liability insurance at meeting locations (hospitals, churches, community centers, etc.) and places where events are held. This insurance would be to cover the fellowship against liability in the event of property damage, an accident to a member due to their participation, or other possible claims at the meeting or event.

In your local Area, you should check with different insurance brokers or carriers for insurance information. Some insurance companies specialize in insuring non-profit organizations. In many places, to qualify for having insurance, your Area must be registered as a non-profit organization. Some insurance carriers will cover an event for one time only, some will cover all events for the year, and others will cover both meetings and events. It is suggested you research the cost structure that would be most appropriate for the number of events, meetings, and districts in your Area.

INDUCTING NEW TREASURERS

GROUP LEVEL – TREASURER QUALIFICATIONS

1. Suggested sobriety time: One Year
2. Suggested prior service time: Six Months
3. Commitment: One Year
4. One year gainfully employed and/or financially solvent

When inducting a new Treasurer, it is suggested the following information is passed on:

- Show how financial records are kept
- Show ways the bank accounts are maintained and checks/cheques and other payment methods (debit cards, online banking, etc...) are used
- How to fill out financial reports and update the Group
- How to pass on contributions to the District, Area and World Services
- How to document the collected 7th Tradition funds

DISTRICT AND AREA LEVEL – TREASURER QUALIFICATIONS

1. Suggested sobriety time: Two Years (District) Three Years (Area)
2. Suggested prior service time: One Year
3. Commitment: One Year (District) Two Year (Area)
4. One year gainfully employed and/or financially solvent
5. Previous experience with bookkeeping and/or accounting preferred

When inducting a new Treasurer, it is suggested the following information is passed on

- Shows how to collect and deposit all funds
- How to fill out financial reports and update the District/Area
- Show ways the bank accounts are maintained and checks/cheques and other payment methods (debit cards, online banking, etc.) are used
- Give financial reports and copies of bank statements with the account number and other sensitive information blacked out
- Files return(s) with local and national agencies (i.e. tax returns, non-profit forms, etc.)
- Pays all bills/expenses (i.e. rent)
- Passes on all contributions to Area/World Service according to the 70/30 plan

AREA CONVENTIONS AND OTHER EVENTS

Every convention and event should have a Treasurer. This individual is responsible to the Event Committee and Area Treasurer for timely financial reports. At the end of the event a reconciliation of income and expenses needs to be forwarded to the Area Treasurer, along with any donation from that event. A copy of this reconciliation should be available to all members of the Area/District Service Committee. An individual, who signs a contract with a hotel or event place without the fellowship being a non-profit organization, is personally liable for any and all of the contract obligations.

PREVENTING MISMANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

Unfortunately, mismanagement of funds has occurred at various levels of C.A. Adhering to the **Treasurer Qualifications** is your first precaution to prevent this from happening in your Group, District or Area. Make sure you elect a responsible member of your fellowship to handle your money. Ensure they are providing accurate reports through regular reviews of financial records and bank statements. Request additional information if there are any questions regarding the reporting system or money handling techniques. It is suggested that additional members of the fellowship have viewing access to bank accounts for verification.

If the District or Area Treasurer is not present at a fellowship event (i.e.: dances, potlucks, carnivals, conventions, or any other type of fund-raising event) reconciliation of income and expenses to the District and/or Area is essential for safeguarding funds. It is strongly suggested that monies from events and activities be verified by both the Committee/Event Treasurer and an additional elected Committee Member. Funds should be passed to the appropriate person or entity as soon as possible.

Under **NO Circumstances** should anyone borrow money from the Group's funds. All funds belong to the group only, not an individual. However uncomfortable, it is suggested that the Group, District and Area adopt and enforce procedures to provide checks and balances in the fellowship's finances.

These suggestions have been researched and proven to be effective.